AGU

James B. Macelwane Award: Citation and Acceptance of Robert Keith O'Nions

Citation

I have the pleasure to introduce Robert Keith O'Nions, a young man of 34, for the Macelwane Award, not because I have had anything to do with his education and research, but because I was a member of the committee this year, and we both originate from the same country. Keith O'Nions earned his B.Sc. from the University of Nottingham in 1966, traveled to Alberta for a Ph.D. in 1969, became a Postdoctoral Fellow in Oslo during 1970, joined the faculty at Oxford from 1971–1975, and moved to his present home at Columbia University in 1975.

When the time came to find a citationist [sic] for him it turned out that his colleagues at Lamont-Doherty, who were the obvious choices, were all at sea—and I admit that this is how I feel when I read some of Keith's papers. In a sense, this makes me well-suited for this introduction, because I cannot spend time explaining his research to you. Instead, I will read to you a couple of paragraphs from his nomination for the award, written by an anonymous friend:

'In my estimation Keith O'Nions is one of the three best geochemists in the age range of 30 to 36. He is the first U-Pb, Rb-Sr, Sm-Nd, rare earth geochemist in many years to crash the sacred circle which for so long consisted of Wasserburg, Wetherill, Gast, and Hart. Allegre managed this same feat some years ago. A few younger men are trying hard but have far to go. To be "in" you must run a high-precision mass spectrometer laboratory, do research on planetary evolution, and have very heavy thoughts with regard to modeling.

'O'Nions has established what I suspect is now the premier measurement facility for these properties in the entire world. He produces large numbers of highly precise measurements each month and works around the clock to improve his blanks and equipment. He is carrying out studies on earth materials aimed at fundamental questions regarding the differentiation of planet Earth. Publications flow rapidly from his group. Considering that only 3 years have passed since his arrival at Lamont-Doherty, this is a truly remarkable accomplishment.'

A remarkable accomplishment indeed. It is clear from the 'Introductions' and 'Conclusions' of his papers, which I do understand, and from his public lectures, that he is a geochemist using isotopes to provide interpretations of great value to petrologists, to geologists, and to geophysicists. And that encompasses a large part of the activities of the American Geophysical Union.

Peter J. Wyllie

Acceptance

I accept this award with certain mixed feelings. On the one hand, I am undeniably flattered to have been selected to join the ranks of a distinguished group of scientists who have received this award previously. On the other hand, I feel somewhat embarrassed inasmuch as my work has been carried out largely in collaboration with others (most of similar a vintage as myself) who have made comparable contributions.

The field of research in which I find myself has become highly developed in terms of instrumentation and technique over the last decade, so much so that it is virtually impossible to research adequately alone. Rather, successful research requires the close collaboration of several people who possess a spectrum of talents. In this respect, I have been particularly fortunate both here in the U.S. and formerly at Oxford in having the opportunity to work with unusually talented colleagues. I owe a great debt to these colleagues for their stimulating collaboration over the years.

My career to date has involved research in several different universities and countries, and I am grateful to former mentors and colleagues in Alberta, Oslo, and Oxford for their help and encouragement.

Peter Wyllie has mentioned in his citation the names of some of those scientists who have made isotope geochemistry what it is today. These and other scientists have set and maintained high intellectual and analytical standards in isotope geochemistry which my colleagues and I have tried to emulate and [to] follow the lead that they have shown.

Lastly, I would like to thank Peter Wyllie for his citation.

R. K. O'Nions

James B. Macelwane Award: Citation and Acceptance of Ralph J. Cicerone

Citation

Ralph J. Cicerone came to work for us at The University of Michigan in the fall of 1970 after completing his Ph.D. in electrical engineering and physics at The University of Illinois under Professor S. A. Bowhill. Those of you who know him for his work in atmospheric chemistry might not know that his undergraduate education (B. S. from MIT, 1965) was also in electrical engineering. He tells me that he went to MIT intending to major in chemistry, but that electrical engineering was very exciting and alluring to mid-60's undergraduates at MIT and the emphasis on basic sciences left him fairly well prepared to branch out later in his career. His Ph.D. research and his subsequent work with us at